

1.0 Introduction

This project-level Environmental Impact Report (EIR) comprehensively addresses the environmental consequences of subdivision of property, and construction and occupation of residences as a part of the American Vineyard Village Project (the Project), which is located in unincorporated Placer County adjacent to the City of Roseville. A complete Project description is provided in Section 2.0 of this EIR. The Project would include the subdivision of a 19.2-acre site to accommodate 150 single-family residences, installation of supporting infrastructure, and the eventual long-term occupation of the residences.

Project Background

The Project site is located within the boundaries of the *Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan* area. This area has rapidly developed in the recent past, with former rural residential and agricultural properties being converted to urban residential, commercial, and public land uses. The Community Plan is intended to implement the General Plan within its boundaries and establishes goals, objectives, and policies to guide the physical development of the area, including the Project. An EIR analyzing the environmental effects of the build out of the *Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan* area was previously prepared and certified by the County.

Purpose of the EIR

This Draft EIR has been prepared by the County of Placer (the County), in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines, as well as the County's Environmental Review Ordinance. As provided in Section 15121(a) of the CEQA Guidelines, this Draft EIR is intended to serve as an informational document that will:

...inform public agency decision-makers and the public generally of the significant environmental effects of a project, identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects, and describe reasonable alternatives to the Project...

Section 15378 of the CEQA Guidelines defines a "project" as the whole of an action, which has the potential to result in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. The term "project" refers to the activity that is being considered for approval and that may be subject to several discretionary approvals by governmental agencies.

Prior to approving the proposed Project, pursuant to Section 15091 of the CEQA Guidelines, one or more of the following findings must be made for each significant environmental effect identified through the Draft EIR process:

- Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.
- Such changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and not the agency making the finding. Such changes have been adopted by such other agency or can and should be adopted by such other agency.
- Specific economic, social, or other considerations make infeasible the mitigation measures or project alternatives identified in the final EIR.

In addition, Section 15093 of the CEQA Guidelines requires that the decision makers balance the benefits of proposed projects with their environmental effects. If the benefits of a project outweigh the unavoidable adverse effects, the environmental effects may be considered acceptable and a statement of overriding considerations would be adopted.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15004 stipulates that EIRs should be prepared as early as feasible in the planning process to enable environmental considerations to influence project design. To the extent possible, the EIR process should be combined with the existing planning, review, and project approval process used by each public agency (CEQA Guidelines Section 15080). Consequently, this Draft EIR is completed prior to formal consideration by the County of the Project, ensuring an opportunity to develop Project design alternatives and other measures which would minimize the potential adverse environmental effects associated with the Project.

In accordance with State law, the EIR is subject to a public review and comment period, beginning with the circulation of the document to all responsible, trustee, or other interested State, federal, and local agencies. The availability of the EIR and specified review period is noticed in the manner prescribed by law to afford the public knowledge of the review process and access to the environmental document. During this review period, written comments regarding the environmental aspects of the Project are submitted to the Lead Agency. This review and comment period allows the public and interested agencies the opportunity to participate in the environmental review process.

Following the review period, comments received, whether written or oral, are evaluated and a written response is prepared. These comments and responses are incorporated into the Final EIR, along with a list of all persons, organizations, and agencies commenting on the Draft EIR. The County may then certify that the Final EIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA and that the information contained in the Final EIR was reviewed and considered prior to making a decision on the Project.

Along with the necessary findings, the County will adopt a mitigation monitoring and reporting program. This program is required by law to ensure that mitigation measures deemed necessary and feasible by the Lead Agency are implemented. Adoption of a mitigation monitoring and reporting program is independent of the EIR certification process. Please see Appendix L, which is the draft Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Project.

Previous Environmental Analysis

Placer County General Plan and EIR

Placer County last adopted a comprehensive General Plan and General Plan EIR in 1994. The General Plan is a State-mandated document that is required to contain seven elements: Land Use, Circulation, Open Space, Conservation, Safety, Noise, and Housing (The Housing Element is typically adopted and maintained separately from the other General Plan elements, but is considered part of the General Plan). The Placer County General Plan also includes a Recreational and Cultural Resources Element, a Public Facilities and Services Element, and an Agricultural and Forestry Resources Element. Elements contain goals, policies, and programs that represent the character of growth desired by the community and provide guidance to development. The General Plan requires that all development is consistent with its goals, policies, and programs and is subject to site development and design review to ensure consistency. Policies in the General Plan are implemented through actions taken by the County's Planning Commission and the County Board of Supervisors. The General Plan EIR is a programmatic document that considers the environmental impacts of implementation of the General Plan at a general and countywide level. Impacts specific to individual development projects are subject to project-level environmental analysis.

Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan and EIR

The *Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan* and EIR were adopted in 1990. The *Community Plan*, like the County General Plan, sets forth goals, policies and implementation programs that guide future development. The difference is that these goals, policies, and programs apply more specifically to future development within the *Community Plan* area, which is generally the area of Placer County west of the City of Roseville and south of Base Line Road. All goals, policies, and programs in the *Community Plan* are consistent with those of the County General Plan. The Project site is located within the *Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan* Area. Like the General Plan EIR, the *Community Plan* EIR is a programmatic document.

Scope and Methodology

The County has determined that the proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment and that an EIR is necessary.

To assist the County in determining the scope of analysis for the EIR, a Notice of Preparation (NOP) with a preliminary project description was sent to the State Clearinghouse and to various responsible and trustee agencies. A copy of the Notice of Preparation and Initial Study are contained in **Appendix A** of this document, along with a list of responsible and trustee agencies to which these documents were sent. Several organizations/agencies submitted responses to the NOP to the County prior to the close of the review period, which was December 20, 2005. These responses are also contained in **Appendix A**.

This Draft EIR analyzes the potential effects of site preparation, construction, and operation of the Project, including direct effects of the Project, as well as reasonably foreseeable indirect effects and

cumulative and growth-inducing effects. The following is a summary description of the environmental topics addressed in this Draft EIR, based on the requirements of CEQA and comments received in response to the NOP.

- **Aesthetics.** Addresses visual impacts of the proposed Project, including the effects of site grading, building construction, nighttime illumination and daytime glare on viewsheds, area visual resources, and designated scenic resources.
- **Air Quality.** Addresses the direct and cumulative effect the Project will have on the air quality of the Project vicinity and the Placer County portion of the Sacramento Valley Air Basin both temporarily, during construction, and on a long-term basis. This EIR also evaluates exposure of proposed uses to existing or known future sources of harmful air pollutants.
- **Biological Resources.** Addresses the impacts on the diversity and number of plant and animal species that may be present on-site, threatened and endangered plants and wildlife, jurisdictional wetlands, habitat deterioration, and relationship to any adopted conservation plans.
- **Cultural Resources.** Addresses potential impacts the Project may have on known and unknown prehistoric and historical resources.
- **Geology, Soils, and Mineral Resources.** Addresses geotechnical impacts associated with site development, including soil limitations and erosion, and geologic/seismic hazards.
- **Hazards.** Addresses impacts associated with any site contamination, release of hazardous substances, proximity to any known hazards, and other safety issues associated with the Project.
- **Hydrology and Water Quality.** Addresses short- and long-term changes in drainage patterns resulting from site grading, changes in absorption rates and runoff, changes in surface water quality, and quality/quantity of groundwater.
- **Land Use Policy and Agriculture.** This section describes the Project's relationship with policies that have been adopted with the intent of reducing potential environmental impacts of land development projects, such as the American Vineyard Village Project. The impact on agricultural resources and the practice of agriculture is examined.
- **Noise.** This section addresses the level of noise generated during construction and by occupation of the proposed Project, as well as the effect of the existing noise environment on the future residents of the Project.
- **Population and Housing.** This section describes the Project's effects related to population growth and housing in the vicinity.
- **Public Services, Public Utilities, and Recreation.** This section addresses the impact the Project may have on the ability of the County and other service providers to maintain sufficient levels of service for police, fire, school, and recreation services, and the impact of any capacity expansions required as a result of the Project. This section also addresses the ability of public

utility providers to service the uses proposed in the Project and the impact of any service or capacity extensions or expansions required as a result of the Project.

- **Transportation.** Addresses direct and cumulative effects of the Project on the roadway system, vehicular circulation, transportation safety hazards, and bicycle/pedestrian circulation.
- **Climate Change.** This section addresses Project impacts related to global climate change.
- **Project Alternatives.** Provides an analysis of viable alternatives to the proposed Project, as prescribed in Section 15126.6(a) of the CEQA Guidelines and as further described in applicable case law.
- **Cumulative and Long-Term Effects.** Provides an analysis of the cumulative impact of the Project as viewed in conjunction with other land use change in the vicinity, as well as potential irreversible changes that would occur as a result of the Project, as described in Section 15126(c) of the CEQA Guidelines.

Areas of Controversy/Issues to be Resolved

Several parties submitted responses to the Notice of Preparation (NOP) of the Project EIR. The NOP responses are included in **Appendix A**. Each comment is specifically addressed in the EIR. Several agencies identified issues and information that would need to be included in the DEIR. These comments were considered by the County during preparation of this EIR.

FLOOD CONTROL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

1. The proposed development has the potential to create the following impacts:
 - Higher peak flow rates at downstream locations.
 - Overloading of the actual or designed capacity of existing stormwater and flood-carrying facilities.
 - The alteration of 100-year floodplain boundaries.

Future EIRs must specifically quantify the incremental effects of each of the above impacts due to the land use and density changes proposed by the subject project, and must propose mitigation measures where appropriate.

2. This project is located in the Dry Creek watershed near a tributary to Dry Creek. A general assessment of flooding in this watershed is provided in the "Dry Creek Watershed Flood Control Plan" report by James M. Montgomery Engineers (JMM), April 1992. Figure 5-2 (JMM, 1992) indicates this project is located where local detention is not recommended. However, onsite stormwater mitigation may be necessary if the existing downstream drainage facilities cannot accommodate the project's increase in peak flow rates.

The District requests the opportunity to review all further environmental documentation for the subject project.

PLACER COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

1. Although the proposed project site appears to be adjacent to City of Roseville on two sides, north and east, the other two sides, south and west, are not currently adjacent to development. The land in this area south of Vineyard Road has historically been used for agricultural purposes such as orchards and grazing land and therefore is still a significant part of the county's agricultural land base. The loss of agricultural resources affects all the citizens of Placer County. The negative impacts of converting the County's finite agricultural land base to non-agricultural land uses needs to be recognized as a significant cumulative impact and appropriately mitigated.

I do not support amending the Placer County General Plan and rezoning this property to accommodate this proposed project. If the project is approved, I recommend the Planning Department consider all options for mitigating the loss of 19.2 acres of agricultural land, including, but not limited to, permanent preservation of an equivalent 19.2 acres of agricultural land somewhere else in Placer County. In addition, the issue of adequate buffers between existing and future agricultural operations and residential areas needs to be carefully evaluated and appropriate buffers be incorporated within the development on the south and east sides. Despite the County's Right-to-Farm Ordinance, the negative impacts on farmers and ranchers from residential areas can be significant.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT 3 OFFICE

Placer County's Traffic Impact Study (TIS) should consider possible traffic impacts to Interstate 80, including impacts to all ramps, ramp intersections, and the main line.

PLACER COUNTY WATER AGENCY (PCWA)

1. The proposed project is located in the California American Water Company franchise area. Cal-American contracts with PCWA for treated surface water. The proposed project is not located within a PCWA service zone. The parcels will require annexation into PCWA's Zone 1 service area in order for Cal-American Water Company to provide treated water service to the project.

2. PCWA encourages the use of reclaimed water for irrigation purposes in this project.

3. PCWA would like to preserve the option of acquiring ownership of the existing well located in the project for future use as a backup groundwater supply under drought or emergency circumstances.

CITY OF ROSEVILLE

1. The project appears to be located in the County. As such, the sewer service needs to be supplied by the County sewer district (i.e. Placer County Sewer District). Therefore, in Item 8 of the Initial Project Application (IPA) for "Sewer", Roseville Regional Sewer FD should be replaced with Placer County Sewer District as shown in Item 63 of the Environmental Impact Assessment, Questionnaire.

2. The applicant must demonstrate and determine impacts from this development as it relates to the 1996 Roseville Regional Wastewater Master Plan and EIR (master plan). In the master plan, a set amount of wastewater flow was allocated to this site. This planned amount needs to be compared to the amount proposed by the project and if the proposed wastewater flow for the project is more, impacts need to be assessed and mitigated.

3. The proposed wastewater generation by the project as shown in item 60 of the EIAQ is 7000 gpd. This figure is not representative of 161 units. For treatment flow, the master plan recommends 260 gpd/edu. At 161 units this amounts to about 42,000 gpd. This is six (6) times the amount shown in item GD of the EIAQ. *[Note: The Project was later revised to include 150 single-family residential lots, as opposed to the 161 referenced in this comment. Please see Section 2.0 of this EIR for a complete and current description of the Project].*

4. Item 3 of the EIAQ shows a total of 164 units/lots with 3 lots and landscape. This is not consistent with the Tentative Subdivision Map for American Vineyard Village, which shows 161 units/lots with 3 landscape lots. *[Note: The Project was later revised to include 150 single-family residential lots, as opposed to the 161 referenced in this comment. Please see Section 2.0 of this EIR for a complete and current description of the Project].*

The County conducted a public scoping session on December 7, 2005 to gather public input on the environmental issues that should be included as a part of this EIR, and brainstorm potential solutions to the environmental impacts identified. Issues expressed at that public meeting include:

Traffic

- Concern related to increased traffic volume on local streets, particularly Vineyard Road, Brady Lane, and Cook-Riolo Road as a result of this project.
- Concern about existing sight distance problems at the intersections of Brady Lane/Vineyard Road and Brady Lane/Baseline Road.
- Lack of parkland in the project will result in children walking along Vineyard Road in search of off-site recreational opportunities.
- Concern about potential congestion when a new school that being constructed in the area becomes operational.
- Suggestion that another access point be obtained from a street other than Vineyard Road.
- Narrow bridge crossings of creeks in the area cause traffic slowing that will be exacerbated by the additional traffic from the proposed project.

Biological

- Displacement of animals, particularly displacement of rodents that create problems at adjoining homes.
- Suggestion that some of the trees be retained.

Storm Run-off/Drainage

- Several residents in the Misty Lane area to the west of the project site described existing drainage problems that have worsened in recent years as surrounding lands have been developed.
- Concern that the proposed project will exacerbate existing storm drainage problems by adding more impervious surface in the area.
- Suggestion that all stormwater from this project be directed offsite to the south, rather than to the west, where existing flooding problems are occurring.

Visual Impact

- Preference that no sound wall be constructed along Vineyard Road.
- Request that information about the design and appearance of the proposed dwellings be included in the EIR.

Air Quality

- Concern for air quality effects resulting from fireplaces in proposed dwellings.

Land Use

- Suggestion that the existing land use designation, which would require 0.5 acres per parcel, be retained. This would result in a total of 38 lots.
- Suggestion that some of the proposed lots be replaced with a park.
- Observation that the existing residential development to the north, Vineyard Estates, is much less dense than the proposed project.
- Potential for adverse impact on existing agricultural operations in the vicinity.

Water Supply/Wastewater Disposal

- Concern expressed that new impervious surface on the project site will degrade the production of local wells by reducing groundwater infiltration.
- Concern that the proposed project will deplete capacity for water and wastewater services in a way that will prevent nearby property owners from getting these services in the future.

Noise

- Concern for increase in noise from project resident vehicles.

Public Services and Facilities

- Concern about potential impact on local schools.
- Concern about impact on police and fire services.
- Concern for adequate water pressure for fire flow needs.
- Concern that residents of the proposed project will have no open space or parkland.

Hazards

- Concern that proposed project will exacerbate drainage problems, resulting in more standing water and mosquitoes.

Requested Entitlements and Approvals

As defined by CEQA, Placer County is the Lead Agency for this Project. The Placer County Planning Commission is the decision making authority on the *Project*. The Board of Supervisors must certify this Draft EIR in order for the County to take action on the Project, including consideration of a General Plan/Community Plan amendment, rezoning, and subdivision map approval.

Subsequent to County action on the Project, other agencies may consider actions, permits, and approvals that may be necessary prior to development and operation of the Project. This Draft EIR may be used for evaluation of such subsequent actions. Following are agencies that may have jurisdiction over certain aspects of the Project:

- **Placer County Air Pollution Control District.** The District reviews land use development proposals to identify local and regional air quality impacts. Based on this review, it recommends mitigation measures, both on-site and off-site, to address identified impacts.
- **Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board.** Because ground surface will be disturbed by grading, the Project will require a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) in compliance with the “General Construction Activity Storm Water Permit” issued by the State Water Resources Control Board. Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) are also administered by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board for discharges from wastewater treatment systems, such as the one to which the Project proposes to connect.
- **California Department of Fish and Game.** The Department of Fish and Game enforces various Fish and Game codes, and has permitting authority over activities that have impacts on watercourses and certain biological resources. If an existing fish or wildlife resource may be substantially adversely affected by the activity, the CDFG may propose reasonable measures that will allow protection of those resources. If these measures are agreeable to the party, they may enter into an agreement with the CDFG identifying the approved activities and associated mitigation measures. CDFG is also responsible for enforcing the California Endangered Species Act of 1984 (CESA), CDFG is responsible for ensuring that Projects do not adversely affect a species listed as endangered or threatened under CESA (Section 2090 of the Fish and Game Code).
- **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.** The Corps regulates discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA). “Discharge of fill material” is defined as the addition of fill material into waters of the U.S., including, but not limited to, the following: placement of fill that is necessary for the construction of any structure or impoundment requiring rock, sand, dirt, or other material for its construction; site-development fills for recreational, industrial, commercial, residential, and other uses; causeways or road fills; fill for intake and outfall pipes and subaqueous utility lines [33 C.F.R. §328.2(f)].
- **City of Roseville.** To the extent that traffic mitigation included in this EIR includes modifications to any City roadways or intersections, or if this EIR requires mitigation to other City facilities or infrastructure, the City is considered a responsible agency. Preparation of this EIR has included extensive outreach to the City on transportation and other issues.

Contact Person

Comments on the Draft EIR should be addressed to Ms. Gina Langford, Placer County Environmental Coordination, 3091 County Center Drive, Suite 190, Auburn, CA 95603.

Source References

A complete listing of source references is found in Section 6.0 of this report.